



Consultation, IA &lt;consultation@bia.gov&gt;

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## 1076-AF18 comments

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**Keith S** <ztownhawg@hotmail.com>

Tue, Jul 15, 2014 at 11:31 AM

To: "consultation@bia.gov" <consultation@bia.gov>

Cc: "achoctaw@yahoo.com" <achoctaw@yahoo.com>

Hello,

I am writing as a member of the Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb, in the state of Louisiana. The proposed changes and streamlining to 25 CFR 83 are a very positive step for the federal acknowledgment process and I am highly supportive.

I have a few general comments about section 83.11, as it relates tribal identification and members. I believe that every effort must be made to apply a reasonable standard to interpretation and implementation of this rule. Delineation of tribes and members runs the gamut from well-defined secluded communities to dispersed groups linked only by a shared heritage. Evidence presented in support of tribal identities should be evaluated with the viewpoint that there is not a "one size fits all" approach. Regulations are necessary but the interpretation and application of these rules is where the rubber hits the road. A history of racial prejudices often caused people to self-identify in various ways and the process of proof should be given substantial leeway.

As time has gone on, the "stigma" of minority racial classification has greatly lessened. I see the changes proposed in 25 CFR 83 as another way in which Native Americans can proudly embrace our own heritage. Thank you for all of your efforts.

Sincerely,

Keith Sepulvado